



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **School Committee Minutes 03/24/2009**

*Approved by School Committee April 14, 2009*

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2009  
6:15 P.M.**

**Present:** Denise Burns, Chair, Leba Heigham  
Joe Curran, Vice Chair, Jeff Thielman  
Ronald Spangler, Secretary Joe Curro

Interim Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie  
Chief Financial Officer: Sue Mazzarella  
Special Education Director: Mark Ryder

Ms. Heigham entered meeting at 7:25 p.m.  
Ms. Burns exited 8:20 and returned 8:23 p.m.  
Mr. Curran exited 8:45 p.m. and returned 8:49 p.m.  
Mr. Thielman exited meeting 9:22 p.m. and returned 9:25 p.m.  
Ms. Burns exited 9:37 pm and returned 9:44 p.m.

**Absent:** Sue Sheffler  
Student Representatives

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

#### **6:15 - 7:15**

Mr. Curran motioned to enter Executive Session for the purpose to strategize with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect; Collective bargaining may also be conducted, seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Roll Call: Mr. Thielman Yes, Mr. Spangler Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Ms. Burns Yes, and Mr. Curro Yes

Vote 5:0 unanimous

On a motion by Mr. Thielman it was moved to exit out of Executive Session at 7:15 p.m. and return to our regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Curran.

Roll Call: Mr. Thielman Yes, Mr. Spangler Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Ms. Burns Yes, and Mr. Curro Yes

Vote 5:0 unanimous

### **HONOR RETIRING SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER - SUSAN L. SHEFFLER 2003 - 2009**

Ms. Sue Sheffler was absent from the meeting due to illness. Ms. Burns, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Heigham, Mr. Curro, Mr. Curran, Mr. Spangler, Ms. Bodie and ACE Coordinator Mies Boet-Whitaker spoke highly of Ms. Sheffler's accomplishments with Arlington Public Schools. Rep Sean P. Garballey had presented Ms. Sheffler with a citation from the House of Representatives. The committee presented Ms. Sheffler with a Town of Arlington blanket and noted that a monetary donation to Arlington Public Schools was made in Ms. Sheffler's honor.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ms. Andrea Campbell, parent and parent rep on CARS group (Challenge and Rigor Study) presented a proposed

*model for meeting the needs of gifted and talented children in Arlington Public Schools.*

*Kathryn Gandek-Tighe, parent of an ACE student, would like the School Committee to be creative when planning for this program.*

*Rajiv Kaushik appealed to the committee to review policies to have his kindergarten student transfer from out of state to Arlington Public School and submitted a request in writing.*

*Lisa Reale, parent from Brackett, reiterated that weekly pullouts for students in the ACE program do not meet the needs of the students and asks the School Committee to take action and look into a new program for ACE.*

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM UPDATE**

*Wallis Reamer, Dallin School principal presented research on meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented students in Arlington Public Schools. Members of this study group who were present tonight included: Sheri Donovan, Thompson School principal, Kerry Dunne, Social Studies coordinator K-12, Mies Boet Whitaker, Elementary ACE teacher, Jill Connors Grade 5 Dallin teacher, Amy Duke Ottoson ACE teacher, Andrea Campbell, parent, Nadine Solomon, Elementary Math/Science Specialist, and Judy Malone- Neville, Ottoson Middle School principal.*

*The research presented to the School Committee indicated a need to change the current program. Suggestions to potentially solve the problems would include increasing challenge in the classroom through systematic differentiated instruction, add additional 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in math, science and engineering, more options in various subjects, include involvement and investments from teachers, department head and the administration. We could identify entry points at different stages of K-8 and include K-3 students into the program. Middle School students who might not test into the program could attend after school enrichment programs.*

*Ms. Burns noted that the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment subcommittee had requested CARS do a presentation on the impact of the program on students, and that they had met with CIA subcommittee several times to discuss the curriculum. The School Committee members would like to see actual data on how the program is working for the students and data on how we will know how the program has improved. The committee agrees that the assessment and evaluation piece of the program is very important and has asked Ms. Reamer to continue to find ways to measure the success of the program and continue with professional development on this piece.*

## **VOTE FOR APPROVAL SCHOOL CALENDAR 2009 - 2010**

*The School Calendar for school year 2009 - 2010 has been analyzed for the past few months because of Labor Day being the second week of September, September 7, 2009. After receiving the data from the parent survey, meeting and discussing the school calendars with the AEA union, Interim Superintendent Bodie recommends that the School Committee adopt the start date for Arlington Public Schools teachers to begin on Tuesday, September 8, 2009.*

*Students start date in grades 1-12 will be Thursday, September 10, 2009 and kindergarten students will begin Monday, September 14, 2009. The actual school calendar will not be voted on until early release day dismissal times are reviewed and after the impact on Free and Reduced as well as Time & Learning are considered*

**Mr. Curro motioned to accept the first day for teachers to be Tuesday September 8, 2009 and first day for students to be September 10, 2009 for grades 1-12, seconded by Mr. Curran.**

**Vote 5-1 Mr. Spangler voting No.**

## **SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION**

*The School Committee acknowledges that an annual evaluation of the Superintendent's performance as the Committee's executive officer and as the administrator of the public school system is a key task for the Committee. All members of the School Committee were responsible for completing and submitting evaluation forms to the Chairperson. Ms. Burns reported on the committee member's evaluation of the superintendent.*

## **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

*Interim Superintendent Bodie presented a graph that showed improvement among Special Education Students on MCAS. The graph was extracted from the Rennie Center Report on Special Education students at Arlington High School and the progress of improvement that was found from 2004-2008*

*Ms. Bodie also reported on the Stimulus money Arlington is lined up to receive over two years \$914,028 and the \$721,268 money from IDEA. No additional Title 1 money will be granted.*

*The Massachusetts School Board Association has put Arlington Thompson Elementary School on its agenda for*

March 25, 2009 to move Thompson school forward into the invitation to feasibility category.

## **CHAIR REPORT**

**None**

## **ROUNDTABLE**

Mr. Curran presented two policies: School Admissions JF and Entrance Age JEB and pointed out that the two policies are in conflict with each other. Mr. Curran summarized the situation of Mr. Rajiv Kaushik who moved his family from out of state to Arlington and is currently unable to enroll his child in kindergarten due to the wording of the policy. After the committee discussed the two policies wording, Mr. Curran made the following motion to temporarily suspend both.

**Mr. Curran motioned to suspend policy School Admissions JF and Entrance Age JEB policy for this case only of Mr. Kaushik, seconded by Ms. Heigham.**

**Vote 6-0**

**Mr. Spangler motion to refer both School Admissions JF and Entrance Age JEB policy to Policy and Procedures Subcommittee to see which policy should be retracted, seconded by Mr. Curran.**

**Vote 6-0**

Mr. Curran read the First Reading to amend policy - Election of School Committee Officers BDAA. The subcommittee had recommended changing the second to last paragraph to read: "The Committee considers it advisable that members complete at least two years with the Committee before serving as Chair and one year before becoming Vice-chair or Secretary."

Mr. Curran presented the First Reading to amend of Open Enrollment - JCA and noted that Stoneman, Chandler & Miller had prepared edits to this policy, as did the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee. It was agreed that this policy would be presented showing all edits and brought back as a first reading on March 31, 2009 to the full committee.

Mr. Thielman expressed his concern after receiving calls about AYCC and not having interns working in the district and reiterated Mr. Spangler's previous request to have Cindy Bouvier, Director of Health, Wellness and Guidance to speak on this topic.

**Ms. Heigham moved to have the Community Relations Subcommittee meet and study AYCC disposition, seconded by Mr. Curran.**

**Vote 6-0.**

## **SECRETARY REPORT**

Mr. Spangler reported on the following correspondence received:

Email from Mr. Bartholomew, letter from Mr. MacKay on the Economics Team qualifying for State Tournament. Ottoson Middle School updates, Brackett School Newsletters, Stratton Scene, LABB notice and MASC Stimulus update.

**CONSENT AGENDA** all items listed with an asterisk (\*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

**\* Approval of Warrant # 09128 in the amount of \$ 370,174.94 dated March 10, 2009**

**\* Approval of School Committee Meeting Minutes from February 24, 2009**

**On a motion made by Mr. Spangler and seconded by Mr. Curro it was voted to approve the Consent Agenda.**

**Vote 5-0-1, Mr. Curran abstained**

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mr. Curran motioned to move into Executive Session at 10:26 p.m. for the purpose to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, and to conduct collective bargaining**

***sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel, only to return to open meeting to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Heigham.***

***Roll Call: Ms. Heigham Yes, Mr. Thielman Yes, Mr. Spangler Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Ms. Burns Yes, and Mr. Curro Yes.***

***Vote 6:0 unanimous***

#### ***ADJOURNMENT***

***On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Mr. Spangler it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:53 p.m. Vote 6-0***

*Respectfully submitted by  
Karen Fitzgerald  
Administrative Assistant  
Arlington School Committee/rs*

***draft minutes from March 10, 2009 for review***